



## 'Lab Rats' in the Field

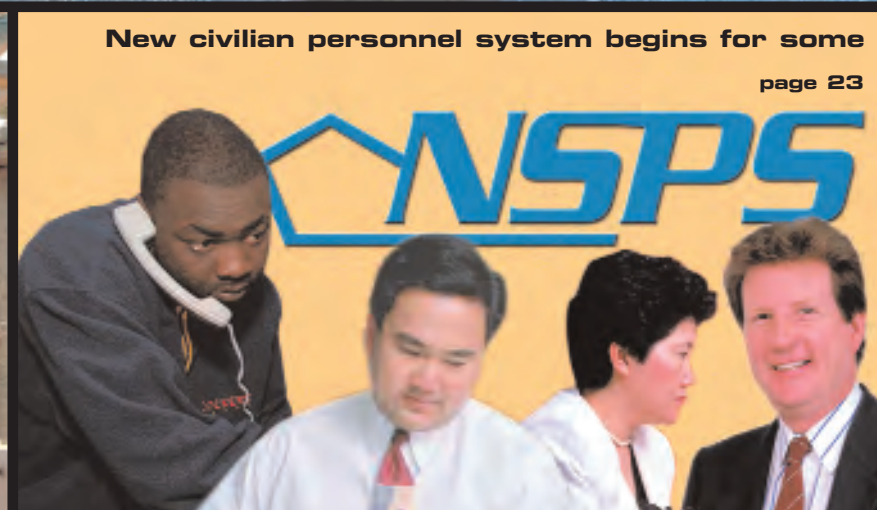
Scientists experience the operational  
side of the Air Force  
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Civil engineers  
help out  
Hawaiian  
charity  
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New civilian personnel system begins for some

page 23





## From the Top

By Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley  
Commander, Air Force Reserve Command



## People's welfare our top priority as we deal with difficult issues

Currently, many changes are being implemented or contemplated in response to base realignments and closures, total force integration, manpower cuts, and tightening budgets. I was the wing commander at Richards-Gebaur Air Force Base, Mo., in 1991 when it was announced that the base would be closing, so I understand the difficult decisions many of you and your families may be facing.

Everyone from the wing level up through our headquarters staff is working hard to ensure our people are taken care of as we grapple with the various Department of Defense and congressional initiatives. The Air Force Reserve continues to play

a significant role in the defense of this nation, and we are doing our best to facilitate ways for Reservists to participate in and contribute to this vital mission.

Using our Air Force Reserve vision as a guide, I have asked my staff to stay true to the "aimpoints" that highlight the key strengths of the Air Force Reserve. Building organizations and processes around these strengths is the best way to provide the world's best mutual support to the Air Force and our joint partners — flying and fighting as an unrivaled wingman.

The first aimpoint in the vision addresses the need for more proactive force planning, in other words, to "optimize ways to employ our forces and advocate processes that make everyone more combat effective." We have seen a number of attempts to establish Reserve positions to replace regular component manpower reductions, but when considering these initiatives, we must ensure they optimize force employment and combat effectiveness. These positions must also be prioritized against the Reserve portion of our directed end-strength reductions.

Finally, we must continue to evaluate new locations for opportunities to both recruit and serve. We will strike a balance between mission and location to address where our members

can realistically serve.

At the same time, we are going to address participation options. Our second vision aimpoint is flexible participation. We will continue to focus our resources on organizations that bring trained people to the fight over the long haul — in a volunteer status. Many people refer to us as an "operational

Reserve." That term describes the gradual move we've made over the years from being a strategic force held in reserve toward a force that accomplishes the day-to-day missions of the Air Force.

The term "operational Reserve" has come to mean different things to different people. To me, it means a predominantly part-time force,

trained to the same readiness standards as the regular component, a portion of which is mission-tasked and engaged at all times. Members of this operational Reserve are readily available to be voluntarily placed on active duty in support of daily operations or utilized as a surge capacity to conduct operational missions whenever there are not enough trained and ready units or individuals in the regular component.

While I fully support this new approach, we need to assess how operational-based we can be before we start impacting the long-term viability of our reserve-based force. We will need to ensure we are funded appropriate to the mission and that we are operating within the key strengths of the Air Force Reserve. Operations tempo has to be maintained at a level that will not hurt long-term participation, recruiting and retention goals or the connections we have built with communities and employers.

If we are to achieve our vision as an unrivaled wingman, we must continue to meet the needs of our people, their families and their employers as we adapt processes and develop organizations. We are doing everything we can to enable your continued participation. Thank you for your continued support and for the critical role you play in the defense of this nation. ★

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED  
SUPPORT AND FOR THE CRITICAL  
ROLE YOU PLAY IN THE DEFENSE OF  
THIS NATION.**

## Chief's View

By Chief Master Sgt. Jackson A. Winsett  
Command Chief Master Sergeant, Air Force Reserve Command



## Effective communication key to helping people cope with change

Have you seen a copy of Air Force Reserve Command's new vision document, "One Air Force, Same Fight ... An Unrivaled Wingman"? If not, you should review it. Copies have been sent to all wing locations; however, it's also available on the AFRC homepage ([www.afrc.af.mil](http://www.afrc.af.mil)).

It's a great publication, and you need to be fully aware of the mission, purpose, vision and future of the Air Force Reserve. After all, you are a major part of the command. ... you're the unrivaled wingman.

Now let's get down to business. My commentary in the June issue of *Citizen Airman* introduced some of my beliefs as they relate to leadership. I want to continue that train of thought and talk about change and what you, a supervisor or manager, a leader, should do to assist our members in time of change.

We all know change can be a traumatic event that has far-reaching ramifications on all those directly and indirectly involved. For members of the Air Force Reserve, change can threaten their way of life, and people often react emotionally and behaviorally to that threat. Those reactions are not bad or reflective of a bad attitude; they simply mean that Reservists are normal people, caught in an abnormal situation, with normal human emotions.

As a supervisor or manager, a leader, you commonly want to avoid these types of scenarios. The normal reaction is to not get involved or not want to share uncomfortable information. However, you must get involved in order to ease the transition for your people. You must help them accept their losses, decide what to do next and make a new start.

In addition to easing the pain of change and maintaining mission readiness, supervisors and managers, leaders, must be willing to listen to the members' concerns, work with them to

address these concerns, and establish an environment that features open communication and a positive attitude.

Supervisors and managers, leaders, must increase the aperture directed toward recognizing those items for dealing with change, to include: dealing with your own feelings prior to helping anyone else handle theirs; recognizing and understanding how change is emotionally affecting Reservists; focusing on Reservists' reaction, not the solution, because you don't have the solution; encouraging open communication; and being aware of Reservists' emotional needs.

Normally, people in transition act in certain characteristic ways. As a supervisor or manager, a leader, you must observe Reservists' behaviors to identify those who are having difficulty coping. You must look for those people who are focused entirely on themselves; this kind of attitude undermines teamwork.

Remember that change is a major contributor to stress, and members can only deal with so much change or loss at one time. Look for increased absenteeism and conflicts.

I believe resentment can and will cause anger, and sometimes resentful people look for opportunities to achieve a little "pay-back." This can happen by starting rumors, instigating morale problems, causing property damage or interfering with the mission.

To ensure that you and your people are ready to effectively deal with change, I recommend dealing with issues head-on. Ensure your actions are consistent with guidance from higher headquarters. If not, ask someone for assistance.

Be honest, quick and empathetic. Stop false rumors. Disclose all. Provide advance notice of any upcoming change. Be an ally to our members who are seeking information.

Communicate, communicate and communicate some more. It's critical to the success of our members. ★

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MEMBERS.**



# Take a Deep Breath

Master Sgt. Carlos Rodriguez tests his oxygen mask aboard a C-17 Globemaster III during Golden Medic 2006 in June. The annual medical exercise, conducted this year in Augusta, Ga., involves medical professionals from various branches of the military, including the Air Force and Army. Sergeant Rodriguez is assigned to the Intelligence, Air, Space and Information Operations Directorate at Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command, Robins Air Force Base, Ga., and is attached to the 315th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, Charleston AFB, S.C. (Staff Sgt. Stephen Schester)



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**Front cover: Capt. Jacob Hinchman (left) and Maj. George Dougherty, individual mobilization augmentees assigned to the Air Force Research Laboratory at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, practice correct procedures for defending a convoy against enemy attack during Exercise Tech Flag at Nellis AFB, Nev. For the story, see page 20.**

**Gen. T. Michael Moseley** *Chief of Staff, United States Air Force*

**Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley** *Commander, Air Force Reserve Command*

**Col. Tom Deall** *Director of Public Affairs, Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command*

**Cliff Tyler** *Managing Editor*

**Bo Joyner** *Associate Editor*

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POSTMASTER: Please send all Forms 3579 to *Citizen Airman*, HQ AFRC/PAP, 255 Richard Ray Blvd. Suite 137, Robins AFB, GA 31098-1661.



# Top-Notch Training

Air Force Reserve Command security forces students practice tactical movements at the St. Elijah Military Operations in Urban Terrain training facility, Fort Hood, Texas, in early May. About 120 Reserve security forces members took part in two weeks of intense combat training as part of Patriot Defender. The exercise, led by a team of Reservists from the 610th Security Forces Squadron, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, followed a three-phased approach of classroom training, a two-day MOUT exercise and a three-day field training exercise. (2nd Lt. Dustin Doyle)





## Bon Appetit

Master Sgt. Darren Harper, 926th Services Flight food service superintendent, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans, La., used his experience in services to get his civilian career as a chef on the fast track. After attending culinary school, Sergeant Harper began working at some large hotels, such as the Hyatt Regency and Intercontinental Hotels in New Orleans, a city known for its diverse cuisine. Currently, Sergeant Harper is the banquet sous chef at the Sheraton in downtown New Orleans, an 1,100-room hotel. In that position, he serves banquet groups ranging in size from 10 to 3,000 people. Occasionally, his job requires him to prepare dinner for 1,000 people, a buffet for 800 and another dinner for 400, all at the same time. "The key is to coordinate and time it right," he said. "That's the difference between being a chef and a cook. There's always a certain amount of pressure until showtime, but that's when you're at your best. When there's a lot going on, I get an adrenaline rush. You want to have the food ready as close as possible to the time people are going to eat. It's a juggling act. But when you make it all happen and everyone is satisfied, it's most rewarding." (Master Sgt. Chance Babin)





# Round the Reserve

A brief look at what's happening throughout Air Force Reserve Command

## Wear of AFRC Patch Becomes Mandatory Oct. 1

**A**ir Force Reserve Command is in the process of making the wear of the AFRC patch mandatory on battle dress uniforms and flight suits for unit Reservists and headquarters staffers.

These people, who include those assigned to the AFRC headquarters and the Air Reserve Personnel Center, can start wearing the patch now. Oct. 1 is the mandatory wear date.

The new patch policy does not apply to mobilization assistants, individual mobilization augmentees and full-time members of the Active Guard and Reserve assigned outside the command.

"Our Air Force Reservists are proud to be Airmen in our Air Force today," said Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, AFRC commander. "As we try our best to be an 'unrivaled wingman,' we are proud of our heritage as Citizen Airmen. Our people want to be recognized as Reservists.

"As an Air Force major command, we wear our command patch so people know who we are. We have been a major command for over nine years. Our folks deserve to be recognized for the great work they do for our Air Force and our nation. We are 'one Air Force, same fight ... an unrivaled wingman.'"

The AFRC patch goes on the right

breast pocket. Unit commanders may approve the wear of one sewn-on, subdued patch — either a numbered air force, wing or squadron organizational patch — on the left breast pocket. That patch will be centered between the left and right edges and the bottom of the flap and the bottom of the pocket.

People assigned to the area of responsibility will follow the guidance prescribed by that combatant command.

AFRC officials approved the purchase of the patches last year, and most units have already received funding to buy them. (AFRC News Service)

## Foreign Language Pay Rates Increase for Some

**B**eing able to speak another language may translate into more money for some military people, including those who do not perform language duties.

Foreign Language Proficiency Pay rates increased June 1 for qualified military members.

The Office of the Secretary of Defense approved the new FLPP rates May 10 for active-duty people and Reservists with valuable foreign language skills. The new rates increase the maximum pay rate for single-language proficiency from \$200 to \$500 a month. People with multi-

ple-language proficiency will see a jump in the maximum pay rate from \$300 to \$1,000 a month.

These new FLPP rates apply to dozens of desired languages in an effort to encourage members with language skills to self-identify and maintain or increase their proficiency. At the same time, the Defense Department hopes the new rates will increase its capability in languages of strategic importance, such as Chinese, Arabic, Farsi and Pashtu.

Previously, FLPP guidance limited the highest language pay rates to only those people performing language duties. A new emphasis on strategic value and language skill level makes all military personnel, regardless of billet or Air Force specialty code, eligible for FLPP in any DOD-approved language in which they can show proficiency at the minimum-approved level.

While the new guidelines increase language pay for some, DOD identified Spanish, Tagalog, Portuguese, German, Italian, Russian, Korean and French as "abundant or surplus." Since sufficient strategic capability in these languages already exists, the Air Force stopped paying FLPP July 1 to members for these languages unless they are performing language duties in an authorized AFSC or language-designated position.

People must still complete language

testing annually to continue receiving pay. However, they no longer need to possess a secret or higher security clearance to qualify for the pay.

The new FLPP guidance also states that incentive payments are no longer limited to two languages. Any individual claiming proficiency in more than two DOD-approved languages may receive FLPP for all languages up to the \$1,000 monthly cap.

Air Force Reservists can find more details about FLPP online at <https://arpc.afrc.af.mil/education/flpp.asp>. For specific questions about payments and entitlements, Reservists should contact their local military personnel flight. (AFRC News Service)

## PT Uniform Mandatory at CENTCOM Locations

**A**ir Force Reservists who deploy or travel in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility are no longer allowed to wear civilian physical training gear. Instead, they are required to wear the Air Force PT uniform.

This new policy went into effect June 10 and applies to all CENTCOM locations.

According to Air Force messages, the new policy is being coupled with a five-year plan to provide enlisted Reservists with the official PT uniform. The plan, which took effect in October, places members of Air Force Reserve Command in categories to receive the PT uniform based on urgency of need.

For example, Airmen who are deploying to areas of responsibility where the uniform is available will be some of the first people to get it. The next groups of people to get the uniform are those activated in a contingency overseas and those projected to deploy to the AOR. The remaining people will be issued a uniform as funds permit.

Unit clothing monitors will help purchase the PT uniform. To get one, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service requires proof of deployment from the unit deployment manager or commander.

For Reservists who are not near an AAFES clothing sales store, the unit clothing monitor can make arrange-



STAFF SGT. C. TODD LOPEZ

**SERVICE DRESS PROTOTYPES** — Brig. Gen. Robert Allardice, director of Airman development and sustainment, and Senior Master Sgt. Dana Athnos, a member of the Air Force Uniform Board, show off prototypes of the Billy Mitchell heritage coat in the Pentagon. The Air Force produced several prototypes based on informal feedback received from Airmen regarding the appearance of the service dress uniform. "We've been getting informal feedback on our current service dress uniform for several years, and what we consistently have heard from many Airmen is a desire for a more 'military' and less 'corporate' look and feel, something more reflective of the Air Force's heritage and its role as a professional military organization," General Allardice said. A more formal survey soon will provide additional opportunities for Airmen to provide feedback and comments. Whatever proposed design changes the Air Force ultimately comes up with will go through the Air Force Uniform Board process prior to implementation.

**COMBAT MISSION** — An A-10 Thunderbolt II belonging to the 303rd Fighter Squadron, part of the 442nd Fighter Wing at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., takes off from Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, on a combat mission May 23. Members of the squadron deployed to Bagram on an air expeditionary force rotation. Once at Bagram, they joined up with active-duty Airmen from the 81st Fighter Squadron at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The A-10s fly daily missions in support of military operations throughout the country. Most of the sorties support Army ground operations through a mixture of close air support, reconnaissance and pre-planned operations. The Reservists will be deployed to Afghanistan until September.



MAJ. DAVID KURIE



approach and guiding principles. In addition, the report presents initial findings and lists the major policy questions the commission will attempt to answer in its final report, to be delivered next year.

"Our focus is on how the national guard and reserves can best meet the nation's security needs, at home and abroad," said Arnold L. Punaro, commission chairman. "We are obliged to gather the facts, assess them in an independent manner and make our recommendations. This 90-day report is the road map we'll follow to arrive at a final report that

is comprehensive, cogent, simply told, clearly argued, well documented and that hopefully will be judged worthy of implementation."

The report presents the commission's seven initial findings:

- America faces the most diverse, complex and unpredictable security environment in its history. The policies, laws, regulations and practices governing the nation's military must ensure that America possesses the capabilities and readiness necessary to counter numerous evolving threats at home and abroad.

- The U.S. is engaged in what national security policymakers believe to be a "long war," which is likely to last for many years. As a result, it must be prepared to respond to the new, emerging threats associated with this war.

- The sustained operational use of and potential future demands on the reserve components pose challenges that must be addressed.

- A balance between the use of the reserve components as an operational force and a strategic reserve must be achieved, and the reserve components

must be tasked, organized and funded accordingly.

- Statutes and policies that adversely affect the reserve components must be revised and updated.

- There is confusion regarding chains of command when federal, state and local authorities respond to domestic disasters. The adverse operational consequences of this confusion must be resolved.

- The Defense Department's and other federal agencies' engagement with governors regarding decisions affecting reserve component people, equipment, funding and operations can contribute to national security and should be strengthened.

The complete report is available on the commission's Web site at <http://cngr.gov/resource-center.CNCR-reports.asp>. (Staff report based on commission news release)

## Alaska Exercise Proves Value of 'Virtual' Training

With a large crew and dedicated maintainers ready to work on an aging airframe, the E-3 Sentry is an expensive aircraft to deploy for training purposes.

The days of involving the airborne warning and control system aircraft in exercises may soon become a rarity, thanks to powerful computer models and the ability to network simulators located throughout the country.

Air Force and joint war fighters put this new technology to the test in June during Exercise Northern Edge 06 in Alaska. During the two-week exercise, participants were able to train with E-3s, E-8 Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System aircraft and EP-3 Aries aircraft without actually flying an airborne mission.

Instead, members of the 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, flew "virtual" missions while members of the Air Force Reserve's 970th AACS, Tinker AFB, Okla., worked as the "white force" or exercise control force from the Distributed Mission Operations Center, Kirtland AFB, N.M.

Master Sgt. John White of the 970th, the

## Pope's Puns



CARTOON BY MASTER SGT. W.C. POPE, WESTOVER AIR RESERVE BASE, MASS.

## Charleston Reservist helps train Iraqi police force

By Staff Sgt. Jeff Kelly

For more than 12 years, Maj. Jeffery Prindle has honed his skills as a professional police officer, both as a member of the 315th Security Forces Squadron at Charleston Air Force Base, S.C., and the Charleston County Sheriff's Office. During that time, he has developed the tools necessary to assess dangerous situations and minimize or eliminate any possible threats to his fellow officers or civilians.

During a six-month deployment to Iraq where he served as commander for Det. 6 of the 732nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron in Mosul, Major Prindle had an opportunity to use these skills to benefit Iraqi police officers.

The major, along with approximately 50 people assigned to his detachment, were responsible for helping to build and train a competent, professional and effective Iraqi police force, which is faced with the overwhelming task of keeping peace and protecting lives and property in a volatile nation.

The Iraqi students spend nine weeks studying such topics as ethics, democratic policing, firearms, defensive tactics, vehicle stops, searching techniques, antiterrorism, first aid and buddy care, and improvised explosive device recognition.

"To date the detachment's efforts have been key to the successful training and graduation of nearly 1,000 Iraqi police officers in this province," Major Prindle said.

During his deployment, Major Prindle said he learned policing there is much different than it is in the United States. For example, while on patrol in the United States, officers do not have to stay vigilant for IEDs or mortar attacks. Likewise, officers rarely have to dodge bullets and flying shrapnel. In Iraq, on the other hand, these activities might as well be written into the job description.

In addition to the dangerous environment, the existence of cultural barriers has also posed a challenge for both the Iraqi trainees and their instructors.

"There are a lot of tactics, techniques and procedures that we as police officers utilize in the United States that are not applicable in police operations in Iraq," Major Prindle said. "To become effective instructors, we had to take the time to



TECH. SGT. STEVEN DONER

**Maj. Jeffery Prindle (right), commander of Det. 6, 732nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron in Mosul, Iraq, prepares to conduct a convoy mission with Senior Master Sgt. Edward Bock of the 185th Airlift Wing, Iowa National Guard.**

learn from our students and counterparts on the Iraqi police training staff.

"They have done wonders to educate us on the culture, history, tactics and practices of the insurgents. Though we are labeled as teachers, it is often more of a process of sharing information and improving current practices."

As Major Prindle neared the end of his deployment, he reflected on the challenges his detachment had to overcome and the accomplishments resulting from its hard work.

"The greatest satisfaction comes from the fact that we have trained over 1,000 Iraqi police officers and knowing that we are having a significant and positive impact on the country of Iraq," he said. "These officers play critical roles in the establishment of a stable and democratic Iraq and will serve as the strength and protectors of this great country." ★

(Sergeant Kelly is assigned to the 315th Airlift Wing public affairs office at Charleston AFB.)

only AWACS squadron in the Air Force Reserve, spent his time simulating bomber, fighter and helicopter flights over the Gulf of Alaska. His "fleet" of aircraft appeared on screens around the Pacific region inside actual Air Force aircraft and Navy ships, and at the Air Operations Center, Hickam AFB, Hawaii.

"Live aircraft combined with a number of virtual entities to give an AWACS crew located in simulators at the 962nd AACS a realistic air picture," Sergeant White said. "Instead of controlling a few dozen live training missions, they operated in an environment that appeared to be a massive air campaign."

"Northern Edge 06 was the first time we trained in a virtual environment with a number of different commands and war-fighting headquarters," said Capt.

Kim Thompson, an air battle manager with the 970th AACS.

While training inside actual command and control aircraft won't ever completely disappear, Sergeant White said he believes exercises like Northern Edge will serve to prove the value of combining live, virtual and constructive elements to give crews a wide range of training opportunities.

"When a crew is flying a real mission, it has to contend with atmospheric disturbances in radio communications caused by changes in weather or topography), maintenance issues, long enroute times to the training area or simply the stress of deconflicting live aircraft," the sergeant said. Virtual training "allows us to get very high-fidelity training without sending a lot of people TDY or spending



a lot of money burning jet fuel.” (Capt. Nathan D. Broshear, 505th Command and Control Wing public affairs, Hurlburt Field, Fla.)

Medical Specialists  
Provide Assistance in  
Sahara Desert

In the sweltering heat of the Sahara Desert, 33 Air Force and Navy medics, both active duty and reserve, participated in a humanitarian mission as part of Exercise African Lion 06 in Morocco.

Doctors, nurses and technicians, representing the specialties of obstetrics and gynecology, optometry, dentistry, family practice, internal medicine, dermatology, and pediatrics, joined with Moroccan medical troops to provide limited medical care to citizens in the Guelmim province May 22-31.

Air Fore Reserve Command took the lead for planning the medical portion of the exercise. Col. Debora Esque, lead planner and deployed commander for medical personnel, said the team members were selected with an emphasis on women’s and infants’ health issues.

International health specialists — Airmen who have language skills in addition to their medical capabilities — were strategically included on the team to help overcome the language barrier that existed between team members and the people they were there to help.

In addition, the team included several people who had experience in other humanitarian missions similar to what was done in Morocco.

During the deployment, the joint team provided medical care to more than 9,400 people in seven villages. They fitted more than 1,200 people with adaptive eyewear and filled nearly 20,000 prescriptions.

On the first day, 250 more patients than anticipated showed up for treatment, Colonel Esque said, so the team had to quickly make some adjustments to efficiently deal with the heavy demand.

Team members functioned as both teachers and students. As teachers, they shared a variety of different medical practices and procedures with their Moroccan counterparts, Colonel Esque said. As students, they were exposed to cases or illnesses they had rarely or never seen, and they learned Moroccan techniques and procedures for treatment of these ailments.

The colonel said the team’s chemistry was a key ingredient in its overall effectiveness.

“Everyone on the team wanted to be there, and the successful outcome was indicative of that,” she said.

(Capt. Chrystal Smith, 435th Air Base Wing public affairs, Ramstein Air Base, Germany) ★

It’s Your Money

By Lt. Col. Ralph Lunt

Now’s the time to take control  
of your financial situation

I’m concerned, really concerned. I see dark clouds looming on the horizon, and from where I sit, this is one monster storm!

In the past few weeks, I’ve spoken with fellow Reservists and clients who are taking a buyout from General Motors, have lost their pensions, are going broke paying for college, are in more house than they can afford, are getting crushed by medical costs, etc. If you or someone you love are not in charge of you financial situation, I urge you to take control now!

It doesn’t matter if you’re 18 or 59; I implore you to take some time and think about how you are going to pay for your retirement. What about health care? College? Long-term care? Prescription drugs?

Yes, this might be boring, make-your-head-explode stuff. However, if you don’t plan for these things now, it’s almost guaranteed that they’ll become your worst nightmare later. The way you and I live in retirement is going to be a direct by-product of our decisions and actions or lack thereof.

Am I saying all is lost? No, not really. It doesn’t have to be. However, if you haven’t taken charge of your financial affairs yet, you better. Here’s why. I see a past and a future full of broken “promises.”

Planning action item No. 1: Don’t plan your future on promises. For example, what would happen to our plans for health insurance if, for instance, the entire Veterans Administration system was folded into Medicare and health-care benefits started at age 65 versus 60 for us military types? What if reserve pensions started at age 65 and were half of what we thought they’d be?

If you scoff at the chances of these types of radical changes, spend a few minutes with an airline pilot, or auto, textile or steel worker.

Planning action item No. 2: An “I got a raw deal” attitude will make you bitter, waste your energy and won’t put a dime in your pocket. Here’s a case in point. Recently, I spoke to a Reservist who was upset about his firefighter’s pension. Promises made had been broken. Understandably, he and the other firefighters are not happy about reduced benefits and increased insurance costs, but complaining won’t help.

Planning action item No. 3: If your retirement income plan is based 100 percent on pension income, your standard of living will decrease in your later years due to inflation. You don’t have to take my word for it. Simply talk to anyone on a “fixed income” after prescription costs or taxes go up. They’ll tell you how tough it is to absorb these increases on a fixed income.

I feel for these people. In many cases, they didn’t do anything “wrong.” That still doesn’t change the fact that they’re going broke. Scary? You bet!

My objective for this column is to shake things up enough to get you to take action to take control of your financial future. I suggest you get started by preparing your answers to the questions at the beginning of this article. The retirement planning ball is in our court. We have to deal with it. ★

(Editor’s note: This feature is designed to provide financial advice of a general nature. Individuals should conduct their own research and consult a financial adviser before making any financial decisions. Based in Cleveland, Ohio, Colonel Lunt is the reserve forces director for the Great Lakes region of the Civil Air Patrol advisers program. He is also a certified financial planner and vice president of a financial planning and consulting firm.)



Reserve Reflections

Moments in time captured by the HQ AFRC History Office

40s • 1950s • 1960s • 1970s • 1980s • 1990s • 2000s

August



- 1 The Reserve supports U.N. peacekeeping efforts in Iran and Iraq with C-5 aircraft and air crews. (1988)
- 7 Reservists from the 433rd Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron fly to Guam to provide support after the crash of a Korean civilian aircraft. (1997)
- 9 The Reserve Forces Act doubles the legally permissible size of the Ready Reserve and authorizes the recruitment of non-prior service personnel into the Reserve. (1955)
- March Air Reserve Base, Calif., receives its first C-17, the Spirit of California. It is the first C-17 owned by the Reserve. (2005)
- 21 Operation Provide Relief, a massive airlift of food and medical supplies, is launched to help alleviate the suffering of millions of starving Somalians. (1992)
- 23 Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., is severely damaged when Hurricane Andrew moves through southern Florida. (1992)
- 29 A C-5 flown by a volunteer Reserve crew crashes shortly after take-off from Ramstein Air Base, Germany. Only four of the 17 people on-board survive. (1990)

September



- 1 Military Airlift Command-gained units transport more than 650 tons of humanitarian cargo in aftermath of Hurricane Hugo. (1989)
- Reservists from C-5, C-141 and C-130 units provide disaster assistance to Caribbean islands after Hurricane Marilyn. (1995)
- AFRC expands its involvement in the space mission with the activation of the 310th Space Group and the 8th Space Operations Squadron at Falcon Air Force Base, Colo. (1997)
- The 920th Rescue Group, Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., is credited with 300 saves in North Carolina after Hurricane Floyd. (1999)
- 3 The Reserve Officers Personnel Act establishes a permanent system of promotion for Reservists. (1954)
- 17 Two crews and one C-130 from the 94th Airlift Wing, Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga., begin flying humanitarian aid into Croatia for distribution in war-torn Bosnia-Herzegovina. (1992)

October

- 1 Five Reserve C-124 Globemaster groups and about 9,000 individual Reservists are mobilized during the Berlin Crisis. (1961)
- 18 Eight Reserve troop carrier wings and six aerial port squadrons are mobilized during the Cuban Missile Crisis. (1962)
- 24 Reserve airlift associate air crews help evacuate wounded U.S. Marines from Lebanon. In all, Reservists fly 63 strategic airlift missions transporting supplies and casualties into and out of Beirut. (1983)

40s • 1950s • 1960s • 1970s • 1980s • 1990s • 2000s





# A Helping Hand in Hawaii

By Bo Joyner

**T**he days started early for the Air Force Reserve civil engineers working alongside the Helemano Plantation in Hawaii this spring and summer: Up at 4 a.m., on the bus at 5, breakfast at 5:30 and on the job site at 6. Then came 10 to 12 hours of hard work under a relentless sun and through frequent rain showers.

Funny thing was, despite the early wake-up calls and long, hard days, not a single person complained.

"These guys are pros," said Chief Master Sgt. Luis Ayala, who was in charge of the Innovative Readiness Training project to build three houses and a community center for ORI Anuenue Hale Inc, in Wahiawa from

April through June. "I tell them what needs to be done, make sure they have the materials they need, and then I just get out of the way."

ORI Anuenue Hale is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing relief to and promoting the general welfare of elderly, disadvantaged and disabled people in the rural and geographically isolated Central and North Shore

areas of Oahu. ORI Anuenue Hale and its sister organization, ORI (Opportunities for the Retarded Inc.), have been lending a helping hand to some of Hawaii's neediest citizens since 1980.

The charitable organization's latest endeavor is Aloha Gardens, a 40-acre development project that will include, among other things, a day-care and wellness center for the elderly; a vocational training center; a campground designed especially for people with disabilities, the elderly and families; farming and agriculture training areas; and short-term respite care facilities and homes for the elderly, the disabled and the economically disadvantaged, particularly those at risk of becoming homeless.

The Air Force Reserve signed on to build three five-bedroom homes and a social hall this year as part of its IRT initiative. IRT is a civil-military partnership through which Reservists receive valuable training while leaving something of value behind for communities throughout the United States. Reserve civil engineers have been involved in IRT projects for the past 10 years. In 2005 alone, more than 400 Reservists participated in IRT projects, racking up more than 60,000 training hours.

For this year's Hawaii project, about 150 Reservists from three civil engineer squadrons spent their two-week annual tours refining their construction skills at the Aloha Gardens site.

"The training opportunities for our people have been tremendous," said Chief Ayala, an individual mobilization augmentee assigned to the 49th Civil Engineer Squadron at Holloman Air Force Base, N.M.

The first team of 25 civil engineers from the 908th CES, Maxwell AFB, Ala., arrived in early April. They were replaced two weeks later by another team from the 908th, then by two teams from the 931st CES, McConnell AFB, Kan., and finally by two teams from the 302nd CES, Peterson AFB, Colo.

"This has been a great experience," said Master Sgt. William Souder of the 931st CES. "I'm a heating, ventilation and air conditioning supervisor, but I had the opportunity to learn a lot about structures while I was here. That's the great thing about these projects: You get to train in your own skill set, but you also have the opportunity to work outside your specialty and expand your base of knowledge."

"That's one of the benefits of IRT," said Chief Master Sgt. Gil Taylor, IRT superintendent stationed at AFRC headquarters, Robins AFB, Ga. "These projects allow our Reservists to gain experience in all areas of construction. That makes for more well-rounded CE troops."

Another great thing about IRT is the goodwill that is created in the communities where the Reservists serve.

"It gives you a good feeling to know you are helping people who are needy and who really appreciate what you are doing," said Senior Airman Ryan Larson from the 931st.

Officials from ORI Anuenue Hale were definitely appreciative of the work done by the Reservists.

"I think most people only see one side of the military," said Susanna F. Cheung, the charity's founder and president. "They only get to see images of the military at war on news shows and in newspapers, but there is another side to the military."

Air Force Reserve civil engineers prepare to raise the framing on the community center while work progresses on three five-bedroom houses in the background at Aloha Gardens, a 40-acre development project for the elderly, disadvantaged and disabled people of the Central and North Shore areas of Oahu.





They are not just heroes of the war, they are heroes of humanity. The military I know is full of compassion, love and sharing."

When Mrs. Cheung started ORI more than 25 years ago, one of the first places she went for help was nearby Schofield Barracks.

"I walked into the Army general's office and asked if he would clear the land for what is now Helemano Plantation," she said. Helemano has been temporarily housing the programs and services for ORI Anuenue Hale until its new facilities are completed. The general agreed, and the Army has been doing volunteer work ever since.

This year marked the first time the Air Force Reserve has gotten involved with Mrs. Cheung's charity.

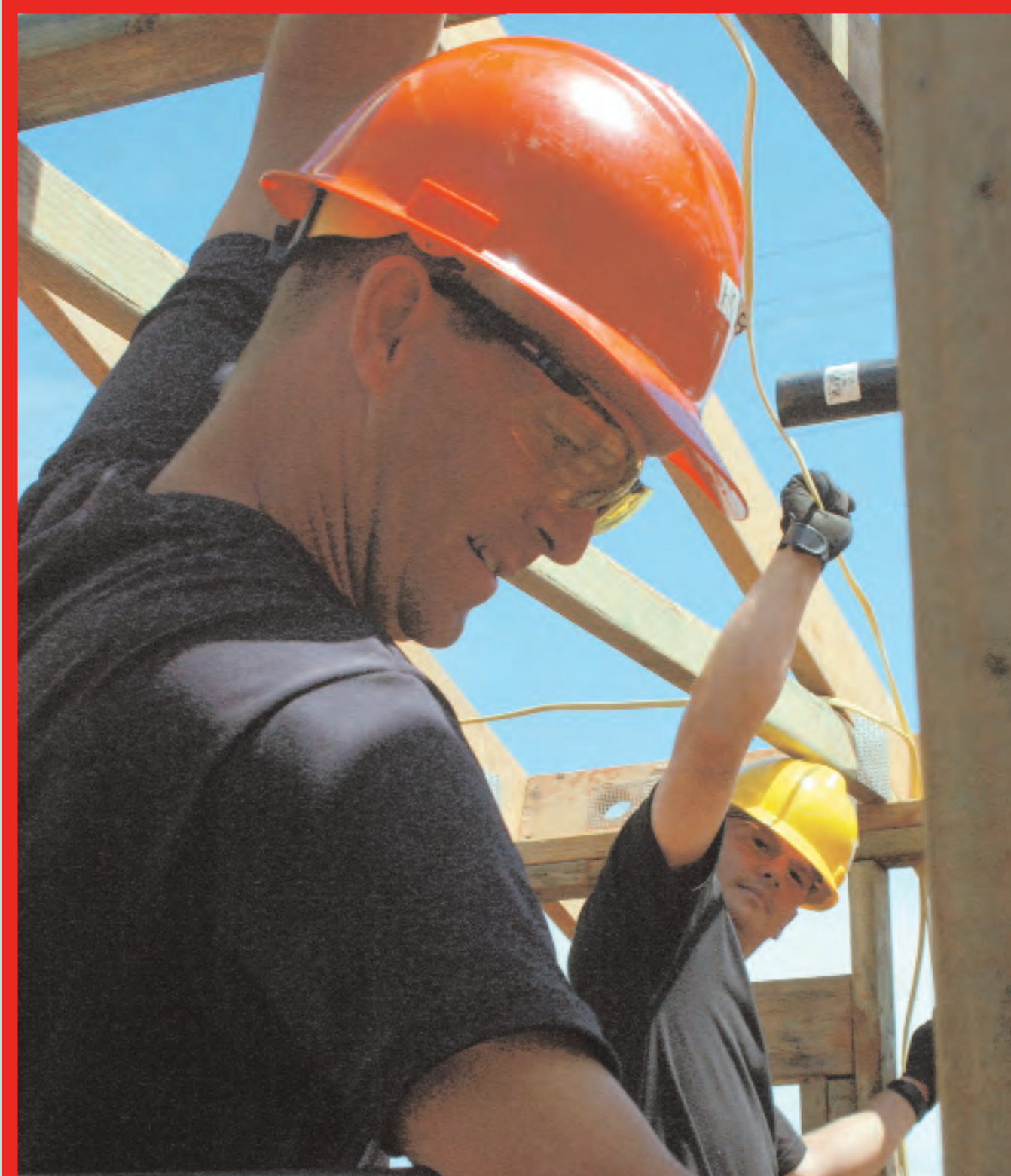
"Mrs. Cheung is an incredible woman," Chief Ayala said. "She has a passion for helping the handicapped and the elderly that is contagious. She has put her heart and soul into this place and has a beautiful dream of what Aloha Gardens will be like. I'm glad the Air Force Reserve can be a part of that dream."

The Reserve is already planning to return next year to assist with the long-term construction project.

"This truly is a win-win situation," Chief Ayala said. "We get great training, and ORI gets some quality facilities. Hopefully, we'll be back in 2007." ★



**(Top)** Senior Airman Ryan Larson of the 931st Civil Engineer Squadron, McConnell Air Force Base, Kan., works on the framing for one of the houses. **(Right)** Chief Master Sgt. Luis Ayala, who was in charge of the Innovative Readiness Training project, poses with some of the people who work at the Helemano Plantation.



Master Sgt. Shaun Hoobler (left) and Master Sgt. Bill Souder, both assigned to the 931st CES, run electrical wiring in one of the project houses.





**Capt. Jacob Hinchman (left) and Maj. George Dougherty, individual mobilization augmentees assigned to the Air Force Research Laboratory at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, practice correct procedures for defending a convoy against enemy attack during Exercise Tech Flag at Nellis AFB, Nev.**

## ‘Lab rats’ experience the operational side of the Air Force

**A** wise man once said, “If the only tool you have is a hammer, pretty soon everything starts looking like a nail.”

Applying this philosophy to Air Force scientists, if they spent all of their time cooped up in a laboratory, the laboratory would soon become their world and solving laboratory problems would become their only mission in life. But what about the people out in the field who have to use the things they come up with?

Perhaps the problems the scientists see and the solutions they develop would be more useful if they could see the world through the eyes of their “customers,” the war fighters.

At least that’s what Brig. Gen. Mike McClendon believes. As mobilization assistant to the commander of the Air Force Research Laboratory at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, General McClendon is responsible for leading about 220 Air Force Reserve scientists and engineers assigned to the lab.

During his military career, the general has served as both an operator and an engineer. As a fighter pilot, he learned to think like a war fighter. As a test pilot, he learned to think like an

engineer. Over the years, he has seen firsthand the gap that develops between scientists/engineers and war fighters. They live in two different worlds but somehow must come together to enhance national defense.

In his current job, General McClendon found himself in the right position to begin to address this problem. His solution involved the creation of Operation Tech Flag, an experiment intended to take scientists and engineers out of their labs and into the field to meet and learn from operators and war fighters.

Originally, the plan was to have the AFRL Reservists become part of an on-going Red Flag exercise. Security and coordination issues prevented that from happening this year. Rather than abandoning the Tech Flag concept, General McClendon and his senior Reserve leadership team simply shifted their focus for the training.

They realized there are many parts of the combat Air Force to learn from. If they couldn’t interact with combat pilots, combat engineering support units have just as much to offer. Lt. Col. Mike Kozak, commander of the 555th RED HORSE unit at Nellis

AFB, Nev., agreed, and Operation Tech Flag began to take shape.

The exercise took place Feb. 4-7 at Nellis AFB. For three days and three nights, 60 “lab rats” from AFRL Reserve program locations throughout the country called Camp Cobra, a bare base facility on the northeast side of the base, home. Their mission was to train, live and interact with members of the combat Air Force.

Col. Rick Bartell, senior individual mobilization augmentee for AFRL’s Sensors Directorate, served as mission commander.

“This is the right thing to do,” Colonel Bartell said. “Many of our engineers and scientists have doctorate degrees and are world-class experts in their field. However, they have spent an average of 12 years in the laboratory without the opportunity to experience the operational side of the Air Force. Tech Flag gives them that opportunity.”

General McClendon credits Colonel Bartell with turning the exercise from an idea into a reality.

“All I had was the vision,” the general said. “Colonel Bartell brought it to life and made it happen. His role was 10 times more important than mine. Colonel Bartell’s attention to detail and strong team leadership overcame dozens of obstacles between the first planning meeting and the last training event at Nellis. The success of Tech Flag belongs squarely in his column.”

For the participants, the exercise was far more than just a camping trip. It included living in field conditions like people deployed in the Southwest Asia area of responsibility, wearing a helmet and carrying a weapon at all times, getting to experience what wearing body armor feels like, and learning to function at a high level in the dust with a lack of sleep.

Field training experiences included erecting temper tents, learning convoy tactics, performing self-aid and buddy care, learning to identify and remove unexploded ordnance, and, for those selected to drive 2 1/2-ton trucks and HUMVEEs, attending off-road driving school.

The buddy care training emphasized initial treatment of wounds typically found in the AOR as well as techniques for rescuing injured people under fire. A day-long visit to Creech AFB, located approxi-



**Lt. Col. Gregory R. Reynolds (standing) and Maj. Christian O’Keefe provide cover fire during an exercise designed to teach proper procedures for recovering wounded comrades from an open area.**

mately 40 miles northwest of Nellis, home of the 11th Reconnaissance Squadron and the Predator unmanned aerial vehicle, provided a rare opportunity to meet with crews, pilots and sensor operators. In addition, many IMAs got a chance to fly the Predator simulator and observe live training operations.

The trip to Creech also included interaction with the Air Force experts in base and force protection from the 99th Ground Combat Training Squadron, the organization that runs the Desert Warfare Training Center where all Airmen destined for ground operations in the AOR receive their training.

Most of the exercise participants were field-grade officers with advanced academic degrees ranging from astrophysics to molecular biochemical studies. While many are true experts in their field, they are far removed from assignments early in their careers when they were more closely aligned with the war fighters.

As they fell into formation with the desert mountain ranges in the distance and the Las Vegas strip but a tiny blur upon the horizon, many began to feel a closer tie with “the real Air Force.”

One very inquisitive participant was Lt. Col. Teresa O’Donnell, senior IMA in AFRL’s Information Directorate. She asked many detailed questions in an attempt to gain insight that might benefit her projects. But her questions were not just for the operators in the field. She also questioned herself.

“How do you know that the new technological solutions being presented as ‘improvements’ are really improvements in the field? How do you determine if a

solution or new piece of software is ultimately making the entire process better or worse? What is the allowable learning curve or ramp-up time before meaningful comparisons can be made?”

Colonel O’Donnell said communication is the key to successfully developing products for field users.

“As military researchers, we need to remember that just because a solution looks good on paper, it doesn’t mean that it necessarily is going to be a winner in the field,” she said. “Besides developing new technologies, we need to work with operators to make sure that ultimately there’s a way to measure the performance and cost-benefit of any new solution we come up with.”

Sparking such questions is just what General McClendon wanted to come from the Tech Flag experience.

“Communication is the key,” he said. “Since we don’t usually turn war fighters into engineers, we need to send our engineers out to learn from the war fighters.”

AFRL and the Air Force have already begun to reap benefits from Tech Flag. One IMA who participated in the exercise received orders to go to Iraq. The short-notice nature of the assignment precluded any en-route training. So the person went forward with the training he received at Nellis.

Another IMA is undertaking work to make substantial improvements for Predator pilots. Areas to be addressed include fatigue-related issues, pilot work load and efficiency, and the lack of depth perception, making it difficult for the pilots to flare the UAV for a landing. He considers the hands-on experience he received at Creech AFB invaluable preparation.

General McClendon intends for the 2006 Tech Flag exercise to be the first of many. He is already planning other exercises to bring his “lab rats” into closer contact with combat and transport pilots, space system operators, and logisticians. The better his scientists and engineers can communicate with and understand the war fighters, the better they will be able to produce useful technology and weapon systems in the future. ★

(Col. Richard J. Bartell, Lt. Col. Mark R. Ackermann and Capt. Michelle Faucher, all Reservists assigned to the AFRL at Wright-Patterson AFB, contributed to this story.)



# Reaching Out

Human resources council looks for more community partners

By Bo Joyner

For years, Air Force Reserve Command's Human Resources Development Council has partnered with Women in Aviation, Tuskegee Airmen and the League of United Latin American Citizens in an effort to help the command attract more women, blacks and Hispanics. Now, the council is looking to add to its list of community partners.

"We would like to expand our outreach efforts and partner with other organizations, especially those representing Native Americans and Asian-Pacific Islanders," said Master Sgt. Rod Hage, the command's HRDC manager. "Those are two key demographics not as well represented in the military as we would feel comfortable with."

Figures for fiscal 2005 show that of 75,802 total Air Force Reservists, 810 (1.1 percent) were American Indian or Alaskan native and 3,045 (4 percent) were Asian or Pacific Islander. According to the latest U.S. Census, .8 percent of the country's total population is American Indian or Alaskan native, 4.2 percent are Asian and .1 percent is Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Robert "Lance" Chu, mobilization assistant to the assistant surgeon general for health-care operations at Bolling Air Force Base, D.C., and the highest-ranking person of Asian-Pacific American descent currently serving in the Air Force Reserve, would like to see more Asian-Pacific Americans take advantage of the opportunities provided by the Air Force and Air Force Reserve.

"But not just Asian-Pacific people," the general said. "We're trying to reach out to all minorities to broaden the face of the Air Force. To become a more effective organization, diversity is one of the ingredients. Our senior leaders have stated clearly that diversity is vital to readi-



**Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Robert "Lance" Chu, mobilization assistant to the assistant surgeon general for healthcare operations at Bolling Air Force Base, Wash. D.C., speaks at the latest annual conference of the Federal Asian Pacific American Council.**

ness and mission accomplishment.

"The Air Force Reserve has given me some tremendous opportunities. I was given the chance to lead very early on in my military career and have continued to have many opportunities to learn and advance. And those same opportunities are available to men and women of all different races and backgrounds."

An HRDC member, General Chu attended the latest annual conference of the Federal Asian-Pacific American Council in Honolulu where he talked with FAPAC officials about a potential partnership.

"FAPAC represents current managers and employees in federal service and is not primarily concerned with attracting young Asian-Pacific Americans into government service," he said. "We would like to see them bring in more young people, so it would be worthwhile to bring in our recruiters."

"FAPAC is just one of the organizations we are currently looking at," Sergeant Hage said. "There may be others that would be a better fit for AFRC. We're exploring all of our options right now. Women in Aviation and Tuskegee Airmen are a perfect fit for us because they share our desire to encourage young people to

consider a career in aviation, and LULAC has a long history of promoting military service for its youth. Now, we have to find the right groups that represent our other target audiences."

HRDC is interested in more than just bringing minorities and women into the Reserve.

"Our focus is on improving diversity throughout the Reserve without setting any quotas," Sergeant Hage said. "It's not just about recruiting, but retention and promotion as well. It's about making sure everyone has an equal chance for development — everyone has the same opportunities

from a training, PME (professional military education) and TDY (temporary duty) standpoint to advance their career."

That focus fits in with the command's new vision document. One of the vision vectors for the combat-ready aimpoint states, "We will enable future paths to leadership opportunities that will be open for the best and most capable." Another vector says, "We will leverage and develop the strengths of a diverse force and train leaders to recognize and employ those strengths."

"If everyone has the same opportunities, the right people will advance to the senior officer and senior NCO positions, regardless of sex or the color of their skin," Sergeant Hage said. "Right now, women and minorities are under-represented in the senior leadership positions."

Sergeant Hage said the HRDC's outreach efforts have paid off in recent years.

"We've seen an increase in the number of female aircrew members and we've seen an increase in undergraduate pilot training minority applications," he said. "Our focus right now is to keep building on the successes we've had in those areas and continue to look for the right community partners to pursue." ★

# NSPS Arrives

First Reserve civilians make switch to new personnel system

By Bo Joyner

Approximately 70 people assigned to Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., are Air Force Reserve Command's first civilian employees to convert from the General Schedule personnel system to the National Security Personnel System. They were among 3,100 Air Force employees who made the switch to NSPS April 30.

"Their conversion marks the beginning of the landmark transformation of the Department of Defense's human resources from a legacy civilian personnel system, with its rigid structure and heavy reliance on seniority, to a pay-for-performance system that gives each employee the opportunity to be rewarded for excellence," Department of Defense officials said in a press release announcing the conversion.

NSPS is being deployed throughout the DOD incrementally. Each increment is known as a spiral. Each spiral is further broken down into smaller units to facilitate implementation.

The AFRC employees at Tinker who were switched to NSPS were all in non-bargaining unit positions, and approximately 30 percent of them

were in supervisory positions, said Charles Carignan, chief, Civilian Personnel Division, Directorate of Manpower and Personnel, Headquarters AFRC, Robins AFB, Ga.

The performance appraisal cycle for the Tinker employees and the rest of the 3,100 Air Force civilians included in Spiral 1.1 began April 30 and ends Oct. 31. Employees will be eligible to receive their first performance pay increase in January. In addition, employees performing above an unacceptable level will receive the general pay increase and the locality pay increase received by GS employees in January.

NSPS officials will be taking a close look at Spiral 1.1 to identify any issues that arise during the transition period.

"We will be monitoring how these 1.1 activities go and continue to keep the lines of communication open with the senior leadership and employees, so we can get early indicators if there are any difficulties and look at them and determine if they are training needs or if they are systemic things that need to be tweaked," said Mary Lacey, NSPS program executive director.

Additional non-bargaining unit employees will deploy to the new system in Spiral 1.2, scheduled for October, and in Spiral 1.3, scheduled for January. Bargaining unit employees will be converted at a later date, when issues are worked out between the government and union officials.

Spiral 1.2 will include AFRC non-bargaining unit civilians at

March Air Reserve Base, Calif.; Eglin AFB, Fla.; Lackland AFB, Texas; McConnell AFB, Kan.; and Patrick AFB, Fla. Non-bargaining unit AFRC civilians at all other locations will be included in Spiral 1.3.

Command personnel officials have asked that civilians at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans, La.; Portland International Airport, Ore.; Gen. Mitchell Air Reserve Station, Wis.; and Willow Grove ARS, Pa., not be included in Spiral 1 since these bases will be undergoing closure activities during the conversion period. Air Force officials have yet to act on this request.

In all, approximately 1,400 AFRC civilians will be transferred to NSPS during Spirals 1.2 and 1.3. Overall, the command has

nearly 14,000 civilian employees.

NSPS got its start in 2003 when Congress granted DOD the authority to establish, in partnership with the Office of Personnel Management, a new civilian human resources management system to better support its national security mission. Highlights of the system include:

- a simplified pay banding structure, allowing flexibility in assigning work;
- pay increases based on performance, not longevity;
- a performance management system that requires supervisors to set clear expectations and employees to be accountable;
- streamlined and more responsive hiring processes; and
- more efficient and faster procedures for addressing disciplinary and performance problems, while protecting employee due-process rights.

NSPS does not affect merit principles, rules against prohibited personnel practices, benefits, allowances and travel, subsistence expenses, training, leave and work schedules, anti-discrimination laws or veteran's preference.

AFRC civilians who will be converted to NSPS during Spiral 1 have been notified of the training they are required to accomplish before their transition, Mr. Carignan said. He encouraged all civilian employees to visit the AFRC, Air Force and DOD NSPS Web sites often to learn more about the system and stay current on NSPS progress.

The AFRC NSPS Web site is located at <https://wwwmil.a1.afrc.af.mil/DPC/NSPS/NSPS.htm>. The Air Force NSPS address is <http://www.af.mil/library/nsps%2Daf/>. The DOD NSPS Web address is <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/index.html>. ★

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The Air Force NSPS Web address is

<http://www.af.mil/library/nsps%2Daf/>.

The DOD NSPS Web address is

<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/index.html>.



# Raptor Ready

## Reserve's first F-22 pilot training to become instructor

By Master Sgt. Jason Tudor

The first Air Force Reservist chosen to fly the most technologically advanced fighter jet on the planet said his experience with the aircraft so far has been “eye watering.”

Maj. Randall W. Cason, an F-16 pilot stationed at 10th Air Force headquarters at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, was selected by the Air Force as the first member of Air Force Reserve Command to fly the F-22A Raptor.

After completing about three months of ground- and air-based training, Major Cason will move from the F-16 into the F-22. The major said he is on track to pilot his first sortie by the end of August. He'll then be assigned to the 43rd Fighter Training Squadron at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., as an instructor pilot.

“I want to help new pilots become as lethal as possible in this jet,” the Abilene, Texas, native said.

His selection came as a result of what he termed a “nonstandard” flying career that has included 11 years on active duty, two deployments patrolling the skies over the former no-fly zones in Iraq and time as an Aggressor pilot at Nellis AFB, Nev. He's also flown almost every variety of the F-16 on the market — the Block 30, the Block 40 and the “Wild Weasel” F-16CJ Block 50.

During his time as an Aggressor, Major Cason said he flew “about 40” missions against the Raptor while the fighter was still in development. He said only rarely did the F-16s get kills against the F-22 — and for good reason.

“Fighting an F-22 is like being blindfolded and trying to hit a pinata,” he said. “Its stealth gives it an overwhelming advantage and the ability to come and go as it pleases.”

He vividly remembers one of his first experiences against the in-development Raptor.

“I got on the radio and said, ‘Now I know how the F-4 guys felt when they fought the F-16 for the first time.’ It's an eye-watering thing.”

Maj. Gen. Richard Collins, 10th Air Force commander and Major Cason's boss, said he couldn't be prouder of the Air Force's decision to train the major to fly the F-22.

“Randy's selection typifies what the Air Force Reserve brings to the fight — an unrivaled wingman who is trained and ready for duty,” General Collins said. “I'm a little jealous that he gets to go fly the Raptor, but we'll be better served having an Air Force Reservist as an instructor at Tyndall showing our future fighter pilots the Raptor ropes.”

Major Cason said he's aware of the importance of his selection.

“My role is also to help establish the Air Force Reserve in the F-22,” he said. “So, it's a tremendous honor to be selected and be amongst the first.” ★

*(Sergeant Tudor is assigned to the Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command public affairs office at Robins AFB, Ga.)*



**Maj. Randy Cason performs a preflight inspection on an F-16 Fighting Falcon at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, Texas, before takeoff. Major Cason is assigned to 10th Air Force and is the first Air Force Reservist to be selected to attend F-22 pilot training. (Senior Master Sgt. Bill L. Goben Jr.)**